

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INRE-00

ERDE-00 /026 W

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O 211314Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1453

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 8626

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PARM, UR, US

SUBJECT: TTBT/PNE NEGOTIATIONS - TRIP TO CENTRAL ASIAN PNE SITES

TTBT/PNE DELEGATION MESSAGE NUMBER 25

1. SUMMARY: PNE DELEGATIONS MADE TRIP TO CENTRAL ASIA
JUNE 15-20 FOLLOWING SCHEDULE CONTAINED PARA 16 MOSCOW 8272.
SOVIETS MAKING TRIP WERE: BEZUMOV, MYASNIKOV, PETROV, NOVIKOV,
MYAKINKOV, ASTAKHOV, SINITSYN AND PATRAKEYEV.
LATTER HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN SEEN THIS ROUND, AND WAS NOT
INCLUDED IN PURPORTEDLY COMPLETE SOVDEL LIST PROVIDED BY
MOROKHOV AT JUNE 3 PLENARY MEETING. DURING TRIP, HOWEVER,
HE WAS GARRULOUSLY UBIQUITOUS, PARTICULARLY WHEN LOCAL OFFICIALS
(BOTH SCIENTIFIC AND GOVERNMENTAL) WERE PRESENT. PRINCIPAL
SOVIET LOCAL OFFICIAL WAS DEPUTY MINISTER OF GEOLOGY OF THE
UZBEK SSR, AKBAR KAMILOVICH RAKHIMOV, WHO ACCOMPANIED GROUP
THROUGH MAJORITY VISIT. MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST DURING TRIP
CONTAINED IN PARAS BELOW. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 17 IN BUKHARA, DEPUTY MINISTER
RAKHIMOV, OF THE UZBEK MINISTRY FOR GEOLOGY, GAVE AN HOUR
AND HALF BRIEFING ON THE URTABULAK AND PAMUK RUNAWAY GAS
WELLS, MENTIONING EACH BY NAME.

3. HIS BRIEFING INCLUDED A NUMBER OF PLAN AND CROSS-SECTION
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DRAWINGS OF THE WELLS IN BOTH DEPOSITS, AS WELL AS SEVERAL

OF THE GEOPHYSICAL LOGS USED AT URTABULAK TO LOCATE THE RUNAWAY HOLE. ACCORDING TO HIS DESCRIPTION, THE PROBLEMS THAT LED TO THE DISASTER IN WELL NO. 11 AT URTABULAK WERE:

(A) THE PRODUCING HORIZON WAS ENCOUNTERED SOONER THAN EXPECTED, AND NO SURFACE PREPARATIONS FOR ENCOUNTERING A PRODUCTIVE HORIZON HAD BEEN MADE;

(B) THE GAS PRESSURE WAS VERY MUCH HIGHER THAN EXPECTED;

(C) LOW DENSITY DRILLING MUD WAS BEING USED; AND

(D) THE DRILL HOLE HAD NOT BEEN SURVEYED FOR MUCH OF ITS DEPTH.

4. THE HIGH PRESSURE GAS FLOW CONTINUED FOR 33 MONTHS (OVER 3 YEARS ACCORDING TO ANOTHER RUSSIAN), UNTIL STOPPED BY THE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. THE INTERVENING TIME WAS DEVOTED TO ATTEMPTING TO LOCATE THE INTERSECTION OF WELL NO. 11 WITH THE GAS HORIZON, ATTEMPTING TO CONTROL THE BLOWOUT NEAR THE SURFACE WITH HIGH DENSITY MUD, AND ATTEMPTING TO BLOCK THE FLOW OF GAS AT DEPTH WITH CHEMICAL EXPLOSIONS DETONATED WITHIN A SATELLITE HOLE. OTHER THAN THE VERY HIGH GAS PRESSURE, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FEATURE WAS NOT KNOWING WHERE THE GAS FLOW WAS COMING FROM WITH SUFFICIENT ACCURACY TO PERMIT EFFECTIVE USE OF CHEMICAL EXPLOSIONS. THE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION APPEARED TO BE THE ONLY FEASIBLE WAY TO STOP THE GAS FLOW.

5. FOR THE PAMUK FIELD, WELL NO. 2 ALSO INTERSECTED THE GAS-PRODUCING HORIZON HIGHER IN THE HOLE THAN EXPECTED AND WITH AN UNEXPECTEDLY HIGH GAS PRESSURE. FIRST ATTEMPTS TO SEAL THE WELL APPEARED TO BE SUCCESSFUL, BUT GAS BEGAN COMING UP ALONG FRACTURES AROUND THE WELL AND SPREADING OUT INTO PERMEABLE FORMATIONS NEAR THE SURFACE. FOLLOWING THIS, A RELIEF WELL, NO. 6, WAS DRILLED SO AS TO REACH THE ORIGINAL INTERSECTION WITH THE GAS HORIZON IN ORDER TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE IN WELL NO 2. THE RELIEF WELL IN TURN BLEW OUT, PRODUCING A CRATER AT THE SURFACE. THE DECISION WAS THEN MADE TO DRILL AN ADDITIONAL HOLE AND TO DETONATE A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE AT DEPTH.

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6. IN GENERAL, RAKHIMOV'S DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS WAS SIMILAR TO PREVIOUS DESCRIPTIONS. HE SAID HE WAS PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT OF THE OPERATION. BUT, INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, WHEN ASKED THE YIELD OF THE URTABULAK PNE, HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW; THAT WAS NOT HIS AREA OF INVOLVEMENT. AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS PRESENTATION HE PRESENTED BUCHHEIM A BOOK PUBLISHED IN NOVEMBER 1974

ENTITLED "PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION OF OIL AND GAS FOUNTAINS" BY V.I. IGREVSKIY AND K.I. MANGUSHEV. ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF BOOK COVERS THE CAUSES AND CONVENTIONAL METHODS FOR CONTROLLING RUNAWAY OIL AND GAS WELLS, ABOUT ONE-THIRD THE GENERAL EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS WITH HEAVY EMPHASIS ON US EXPERIENCE, AND ABOUT ONE-THIRD THE URTABULAK AND PAMUK OPERATIONS.

7'; 9, '7,3 18 THE GROUP PROCEEDED BY BUS SOUTHWARD ON THE BUKHARA-KARSHI ROAD 80 KM, TO A TURNOFF TO THE RIGHT, AND PROCEEDED ABOUT 50 KM TO THE URTABULAK FIELD. VISITS WERE MADE TO THE EXPLOSIVE EMPLACEMENT HOLE, NO. 10 AND THE RUNAWAY HOLE - NO. 11. PICTURES OF THE WELL-HEAD AND GENERAL AREA WERE TAKEN. SAMPLES OF ROCK AND METAL WHICH HAD BEEN GLAZED AND MELTED BY THE RUNAWAY GAS FLARE WERE OBTAINED. FIVE OR SIX LARGE RIGS WERE VISIBLE IN THE AREA WHICH WERE DRILLING WELLS DESCRIBED AS "EXPLORATORY" WELLS IN EXCESS OF 3,000 METERS DEEP. ADDITIONAL "EXPLORATORY" HOLES, WHICH RAKHIMOV STATED TO BE ABOUT 5,000 METERS DEEP WERE NOTED 10-20 KM EAST OF THE URTABULAK FIELD.

8. DURING THE VISIT TO THE URTABULAK SITE RAKHIMOV WAS ASKED WHOSE IDEA IT HAD BEEN TO USE A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE TO EXTINGUISH THE GAS WELL FIRES. HE SAID THE IDEA ORIGINATED IN THE GEOLOGY MINISTRY OF UZBEKISTAN, AND WAS HIS. HE WENT ON HOWEVER, TO FUZZ THE POINT AND FINALLY IT WAS NOT CLEAR FROM HIS REMARKS WHETHER THE IDEA WAS HIS OR THE MINISTER'S OF THAT OF A GROUP WITHIN THE MINISTRY. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT IT WAS THE MINISTER'S, BUT NEVERTHELESS AN IMPRESSION WAS GIVEN THAT IT WAS HIS IDEA. THE IDEA WAS FIRST TAKEN TO THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE USSR; THE STATE COMMITTEE ON UTILIZATION OF ATOMIC ENERGY WAS THEN BROUGHT IN. A COMMITTEE WAS FORMED OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH OF THESE
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AGENCIES, AND THIS COMMITTEE PLANNED THE EXPERIMENT. RAKHIMOV PARTICIPATED IN THE PLANNING. (IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH NOVIKOV, HE SAID THAT A PNE EXPERIMENT WAS EVALUATED AND PLANNED BY AN AD HOC COMMITTEE FORMED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF DIFFERENT AGENCIES.)

9. THE GROUP THEN PROCEEDED TO THE PAMUK FIELD WHERE VISITS WERE MADE TO THE LARGE CRATER AT HOLE 6 PRODUCED BY BLOWOUT OF GAS, THE ORIGINAL BLOWOUT HOLE NO. 2, AND THE EXPLOSIVE EMPLACEMENT HOLE NO 10. PICTURES WERE TAKEN OF THE GENERAL AREA. NO PHYSICAL OR RADIATION SECURITY MEASURES OF ANY SORT WERE VISIBLE IN THE AREA OF EITHER SITE.

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10. FINALLY, THE GROUP PROCEEDED TO A LUNCH AND DISCUSSION AT A BASE CAMP ABOUT 10 KM SOUTHWEST WHERE THE CREWS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION OF BLOWOUT WELLS IN THE AREA LIVE AND WORK. RAKHIMOV NOTED THAT HE HAS WATCHED THE PAMUK EVENT FROM A SMALL DIRT MOUND 4 KM SOUTHWEST, ALONG THE ROAD TO THE BASE CAMP.

11. DURING THE WEEK, THERE WERE SEVERAL REPETITIONS BY SOVIETS OF ASSERTIONS MADE ON INFORMAL OCCASIONS DURING ROUNT II THAT THERE ARE FEW SCIENTISTS ON AMERICAN DELEGATION, MOSTLY POLITICIANS. MORNING OF JUNE 20, IN CONVERSATION WITH MYAKINKOV, BUCHHEIM RAN DOWN LIST OF DELEGATION MEMBERS AND MENTIONED MAJOR SUBJECT IN EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF EACH (ALL BUT ONE IN PHYSICAL SCIENCES.) MYAKINKOV EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE, BUT LATER IN MORNING COMMENTED THAT BACKGROUNDS IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING WERE USEFUL, BUT MOST U.S. DELEGATES HAD SWITCHED FROM SCIENCE TO POLITICS YEARS AGO.

12. LATER ON JUNE 20, MYAKINKOV ASKED BUCHHEIM TO VISIT PRIVATELY (IN PARK). MYAKINKOV STARTED BY SAYING THAT IT NOW SEEMED TO HIM THAT US DELEGATION CONTAINED LARGER PROPORTION OF SCIENTISTS THAN GROUP ON SOVIET SIDE OF TABLE. THEN SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO EXPLAIN HOW SOVIET SIDE WAS ORGANIZED TO HANDLE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS. POINTS MADE BY MYAKINKOV AND RESPONSES BY BUCHEIM SUMMARIZED IN PARAS 13

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THROUGH 18 BELOW.

13. MYAKINKOV SAID COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATIONS ASSIGNED TO STATE COMMITTEE ON UTILIZATION OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SCUAE), AND THAT THIS ASSIGNMENT WAS MADE BECAUSE OF EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE OF SCUAE IN HANDLING SOVIET SIDE OF ACTIVITIES UNDER EXISTING THREE AGREEMENTS ON COOPERATION IN ATOMIC ENERGY FIELD, E.G. CTR. HE SAID AN AGREEMENT ON COOPERATION IN PNE FIELD WAS ENVISIONED BY SOVIET SIDE AS A FOURTH SUCH AGREEMENT TO BE HANDLED BY SCUAE. (NOTE: MYAKINKOV HAS MADE THIS STATEMENT BEFORE AND HAS MENTIONED HIS PERSONAL INTEREST IN BEING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON SUCH A FOURTH AGREEMENT, AS HE SAYS HE NOW IS FOR EXISTING THREE AGREEMENTS. SEE MOSCOW 2555, PARA 14.)

14. MYAKINKOV SAID ALL FUNDS TO SUPPORT THESE NEGOTIATIONS ARE ASSIGNED TO SCUAE AND THAT SCUAE THEN COVERS COSTS INCURRED BY OTHER AGENCIES SUCH AS MFA AND MOD.

15. MYAKINKOV ASKED BUCHHEIM WHAT US AGENCY HELD PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATIONS. BUCHHEIM SAID NO ONE AGENCY PLAYED THIS ROLE, THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE AN ACTIVITY OF US GOVERNMENT WITH ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES PARTICIPATING AS APPROPRIATE. (NOTE: THIS QUESTION WAS ALSO ASKED BEFORE BY TIMERBAEV, AND ANSWERED IN SAME WAY. SEE MOSCOW 1872, PARA 13.)

16. MYAKINKOV SAID ASSIGNMENT TO SCUAE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATIONS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL POLICY INSTRUCTIONS TO MOROKHOV IN WRITING. HE SAID MOROKHOV REPORTS "AT LEAST ONCE A DAY" ON PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS. BUCHHEIM SAID US DELEGATION REPORTS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

17. MYAKINKOV SAID THAT MOST OF THE STATEMENTS OF THE SOVIET SIDE ARE DRAFTED BY HIMSELF AND KORNYEV, AS DIRECTED BY MOROKHOV. HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WOULD BE A FAIR ESTIMATE THAT AT PRESENT TIME ABOUT EQUAL AMOUNTS OF EFFORT ARE BEING DEVOTED TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS BY SCUAE AND MFA.

18. MYAKINKOV RETURNED TO HIS ROLE WITH RESPECT TO EXISTING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT "OUR NEW COOPERATION AGREEMENT" WOULD WORK AS WELL. HE SAID THAT
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THE SAME BASIC AGREEMENT TERMS HAD BEEN USED IN EACH OF THE EXISTING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS IN THE ATOMIC ENERGY FIELD AND OTHER TECHNICAL FIELDS AND THEY WERE WORKING WELL, INCLUDING

THE FUNCTIONING OF THE JOINT COMMISSIONS SET UP TO OPERATE PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED UNDER THE AGREEMENTS. BUCHHEIM EXPRESSED THE PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE EXISTING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WERE NOT LIKELY TO SERVE AS MODELS FOR A PNE AGREEMENT BECAUSE NONE OF THEM DEAL WITH THE KINDS OF LIMITATIONS AND VERIFICATION PROVISIONS THAT MUST BE THE BASIC CONTENT OF A PNE AGREEMENT UNDER ARTICLE III OF THE TTBT. MYAKINKOV ACKNOWLEDGED THAT EXISTING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS DO NOT INCLUDE "INSPECTION" PROVISIONS BUT SAID THAT VALUABLE EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN GAINED IN WORKING UNDER THESE AGREEMENTS. HE THEN (WITHOUT ANY REFERENCE TO ANYTHING) WENT ON TO SAY THAT PNE WORK CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM NUCLEAR WEAPON WORK ON SOVIET SIDE BECAUSE SOME INDIVIDUALS WORK ON BOTH, AND NOT ENOUGH MONEY IS AVAILABLE TO CARRY ON ENTIRELY SEPARATE PROGRAMS.

19. PER PARA 6 OF STATE 146122, INGLEY AUTHORIZED TO LEAVE MOSCOW FRIDAY, JUNE 27 ON BE 673 AND ARRIVE WASHINGTON SATURDAY, JUNE 28 ON PA-107. REPLACEMENT REQUESTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PREFERABLY BY JULY 1.

20. CLARIFICATION REQUESTED PARA 4 OF STATE 146122 IS THE FOLLOWING. TABLE IN PARA 4 OF MOSCOW 8271 SHOULD READ:

MEDIA	YIELD RANGE	DATA TO BE EXCHANGED
GRANITE AND	UP TO 50 KT	A
CRYSTALLINE	50 TO 75	A,B,C(1)
METAMORPHICS	75 TO 100	A,B,C
	ABOVE 100	A,B,C,D
SEDIMENTARY AND	UP TO 15 KT	A
VOLCANIC ROCK	15 TO 30	A,B(1)
	30 TO 50	A,B
	50 TO 75	A,B,C(1)
	75 TO 100	A,B,C
	ABOVE 100	A,B,C,D

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21. RE REQUEST IN PARA 5 OF STATE 146122, ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION OF PARA 3, EIGHTH LINE, MOSCOW 8126 (PNE MESSAGE 18), REFERRING TO "50 SCALED METERS": IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTAINED EXPLOSIONS, "SCALED METERS" REFERS TO DISTANCES IN METERS DIVIDED BY CUBE ROOT OF APPLICABLE YIELD IN KILOTONS.
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Draft Date: 21 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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